MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 61 Bramley Street North

Known as: George Manning Furby House

Architectural Style: Carpenter Gothic

Date Built: Circa 1861 (modifications Circa 1870)

Date Designated: April 21, 1986 to By-Law No. 28/86, SCHEDULE B-6

Lot Description: RIDOUT PLAN 1, LOTS 13, 14, 15



Architectural Description

This clapboarded frame building of two storeys is a composite of irregular form incorporating early and mid-Victorian structures as well as a number of later alterations. Its significance is principally its composite character as a building in evolution with exterior and interior details representative of several decades of the nineteenth century. The tower was a late manifestation of the Italianate.

The main front facing Bramley Street is an informal composition accentuated by a two and a half storey tower with steeply pitched hip roof and centre pinnacle and upper windows having eared trim and slightly pointed heads. This tower, entered from the porch to the side, forms a vestibule covering the front entrance, a door case with sidelights and transom. The portion to the north or left of the tower, now two storeys with a very low-pitched roof and a single storey extension to the rear appear to be the oldest parts of the building. The west bay, to the dining room, exhibits the earliest trim seen in the house, a mid-nineteenth century version of the cyma-reverse and sloped fillet. This section has a front corner room (to the south-east) with a corner fireplace faced with a marble mantelpiece having pilasters.

The next alteration appears to be the front two-storey attic L-shaped section with gable roof facing Yeovil Street, having French windows in one-and-a-half plane width, originally facing the porches, that in the south-east angle now closed in. Windows have eared architraves also flared out at the sill, a typical detail of 1870's buildings. This section has a bay to the south room, the most handsome space with plaster cornice and ceiling rosette, and the most elaborate mantelpiece, of East lake inspiration, in a variety of marbles and slate and most likely originally marbled intricately to imitate an inlaid marble piece. Upstairs is a simple wood mantelpiece with sloping side pieces in a Greek Revival form, possibly part of the earlier section of the house. The stair is mid-Victorian, a vase-shaped newel with bun top and turned balusters. An archway of generous proportions leads to the cross-hall, separating dining and rear sitting rooms, and likely the original centre hall of the older house. Various trims in the house are mid-Victorian in profile and arrangement, the architrave set back from the reveal common after 1860.

Externally the tower, bay windows, front section and rear single storey wing are the principal features. The significant interior detail includes the entrance door case, three mantelpieces, the plaster cornices and rosettes in the living room and sitting room and the staircase and hall archway.

Historical Abstract

George Manning Furby (1833-1911), elder son of William Furby who was the first publisher of the Port Hope Evening Guide, built this house circa 1861. The property on which the house is situated was part of the original land acquired by Toronto banker, Thomas Gibbs Ridout in 1832. Subdivision of the Ridout property and sale of the lots began in 1847. The house is situated on lots 13, 14 and 15 of the Ridout Plan. William Furby (1799-1881) was born in Yorkshire, England in 1799 and was trained as a printer and cabinetmaker before he came to Upper Canada in 1819. He settled in Port Hope in 1826 and for many years engaged in the

furniture business. In 1831, Mr. Furby took over publication of the Port Hope Telegraph, the first newspaper. In 1856, George Manning Furby entered into partnership with Mr. Crea, took over the Guide, successor to the Telegraph, and soon published the paper three times weekly.

George M. Furby sold his interest in the Guide in 1861. He remained active in municipal affairs as both high school and public school Trustee; Harbour Commissioner; president of the Board of Trade; President of the Board of Police (1844); Warden of St. John's Church, and Secretary and Treasurer of the Port Hope Gas Company (1856). He became manager of the Midland Loan and Savings in 1890, the offices of which were located in the building that formerly housed Russell's cabinet warerooms (114-116 Walton, Russell Block).



Archival Photo



View of George Furby House in winter circa 1901 with a fence that once enclosed the property.

Architectural Detail

The front two-storey L-shaped section with gable roof facing Yeovil Street was a later addition. Windows have eared architraves which flare out at the sill, a typical detail of 1870's buildings.